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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE, AND LISTING OF ALL CLAIMS WITH PROPER IDENTIFIERS

1. (Currently amended) [[The use of a]] A ferritic chromium steel comprising, by weight-%,

0.03 to 0.1% of carbon,

0.2 to 0.9% of silicon,

0.3 to 1% of manganese,

13 to 20% of chromium,

less than 0.5% of nickel,

0.1 to 1.5% of molybdenum,

0.1 to 0.5% of copper,

0.03 to 0.05% of nitrogen,

less than 10 ppm of boron,

less than 0.01% of titanium,

0.01 to 0.10% of niobium,

0.02 to 0.25% of vanadium,

less than 0.002% of aluminum,

remainder iron,

as a material for a corrosion-resistant spring ~~elements~~ element.

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2. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1, ~~which contains~~ containing less than 10 ppm of boron ~~and/or less than 0.002% of aluminum~~.

3. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the carbon and nitrogen contents satisfy the condition

$$(\%C)/(\%N) = 0.8 \text{ to } 2.0.$$

4. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the niobium, vanadium and titanium contents satisfy the condition

$$[(\%Nb) + (\%V)]/10(\%Ti) = 5 \text{ to } 17.$$

5. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel as claimed in claim 1 ~~in the state in which it has been~~ having a property to remain metastable when solution-annealed, and to allow ~~cold worked and tempered~~ cold-working and tempering at low temperatures.

6. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel ~~as claimed~~ of claim 1 for producing dimensionally stable, low-distortion objects by stamping or cutting.

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7. (Currently amended) The ~~use of a~~ chromium steel ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1 ~~as a material~~ for fabricating leaf springs, spring rails for windscreen wipers, piston rings for internal combustion engines, sealing lamellae for hydraulic installations, reed lamellae and for products which come into contact with ~~the~~ human skin.

8. (Currently amended) A process for improving the spring properties of material in strand form, ~~in which a ferritic chromium steel~~ comprising the steps of:

cold-working a ferritic chromium steel of a composition comprising, by weight-% 0.03 to 0.1% of carbon, 0.2 to 0.9% of silicon, 0.3 to 1% of manganese, 13 to 20% of chromium, less than 0.5% of nickel, 0.1 to 1.5% of molybdenum, 0.1 to 0.5% of copper, 0.03 to 0.05% of nitrogen, less than 10 ppm of boron, less than 0.01% of titanium, 0.01 to 0.10% of niobium, 0.02 to 0.25% of vanadium, less than 0.002% of aluminum, remainder iron, ~~is cold worked~~ to a degree of deformation of up to 40%;

[[, then solution-annealed]] solution-annealing the steel; and [[quenched]]

quenching the steel.

9. (Currently amended) The process ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 8, ~~characterized by~~ wherein the step of solution annealing is executed at a temperature of 1000 °C to 1200 °C.

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10. (Currently amended) The process ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 8, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising the step of cold-working the steel ~~the solution annealed steel is cold worked~~ with a degree of deformation of up to 65% following the quenching step.

11. (Currently amended) The process ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising the step of hot age-hardening the cold-worked steel ~~is hot age hardened~~ at a temperature ~~of~~ from 100 °C to 400 °C.

12. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 10, ~~characterized in that~~ further comprising the step of cold-working the steel with a degree of deformation of up to 12% ~~is set~~ to provide a mean grain size of less than 15 µm.

13. (Currently amended) The process as claimed in claim 11, ~~characterized by a~~ further comprising the step of final ~~anneal~~ annealing the steel under stress.

14. (Currently amended) The process ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 13, ~~characterized by~~ wherein the steel has a tensile stress ~~of~~ from 20 to 100 N/mm^2.

15. (New) The chromium steel of claim 1, containing less than 0.002% of aluminum.

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16. (New) The chromium steel of claim 1, having a grain size of less than 20 µm.

17. (New) A ferritic chromium steel comprising, by weight-%, 0.03 to 0.08% of carbon, 0.2 to 0.9% of silicon; 0.4 to 0.8% of manganese, 15 to 18% of chromium, less than 0.2% of nickel, in each case 0.1 to 0.5% of molybdenum and copper, 0.03 to 0.05% of nitrogen, less than 8 ppm of boron, less than 0.005% of titanium, 0.01 to 0.05% of niobium and 0.05 to 0.20% of vanadium, remainder iron.

18. (New) The process of claim 11, further comprising the step of hot age-hardening the cold-worked steel at a temperature of 300 °C for 10 to 15 min..

19. (New) The process of claim 8, wherein the steel is cold-worked to a degree of deformation of up to 30%.

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20. (New) A spring element made of ferritic chromium steel comprising, by weight-%, 0.03 to 0.1% of carbon, 0.2 to 0.9% of silicon, 0.3 to 1% of manganese, 13 to 20% of chromium, less than 0.5% of nickel, 0.1 to 1.5% of molybdenum, 0.1 to 0.5% of copper, 0.03 to 0.05% of nitrogen, less than 10 ppm of boron, less than 0.01% of titanium, 0.01 to 0.10% of niobium, 0.02 to 0.25% of vanadium, less than 0.002% of aluminum, remainder iron, and having a tensile stress from 20 to 100 N/mm^2.